

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 are presently pending in this application, Claims 6-15 having been withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, and Claims 1, 2 and 4 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Minowa et al. (U.S. Patent 5,622,585); and Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nitta et al. (U.S. Patent 4,664,943) in combination with JP 11- 334785A (hereinafter "JP '785") or Minowa et al.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been amended herein. These claim amendments find support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed. For example, Claim 1 is believed to be supported by page 26, line 24, to page 27, line 4, of the specification, and Claims 2 and 4 have been amended to be consistent with amended Claim 1. Hence, no new matter is believed to be added thereby.

Briefly, Claim 1 as currently amended is directed to a terminal electrode forming method for chip-style electronic components, and the terminal electrode forming method includes an arraying step of arraying the chip-style electronic components on an arraying flat bed thereby positioning and aligning the chip-style electronic components, an adhering step of lowering a first film coated with an adhesive together with an adhering top plate parallel to the arraying flat bed in relative manner thereto, thereby adhering ends of the positioned and aligned chip-style electronic components to the adhesive, a coating step of lowering the first film, to which the chip-style electronic components are adhered, in relative manner and together with a coating top plate parallel to a coating flat bed provided with a conductive

paste layer of a constant thickness thereby pressing the other ends of the chip-style electronic components to the coating flat bed, and a drying step of drying the conductive paste coated on the other ends in the coating step by mainly heating the conductive paste coated part of the chip-style electronic components.

In a conductive paste drying step, a conductive paste is generally heated over 180 degree C and kept in that temperature during a desired period. Consequently, the member to which the electronic components are adhered requires a suitable heat resistance over 180 degree C. Since a film used under such a high temperature is usually expensive, it is not suitable for use in a terminal electrode forming method such as the one according Claim 1. On the contrary, according to the method recited in Claim 1, the chip-style electronic components are adhered to the first film with adhesive. The first film such as one formed from RET typically becomes deformed over 150 degree C. However, in the method recited in Claim 1, it is possible to use the film by heating only an area of the electronic component on which the conductive paste is coated to dry the conductive paste.

Minowa et al. and Nitta et al. disclose a method of handling electronic component chips and a method of forming external electrodes of chip parts, respectively. Nevertheless, it is respectfully submitted that neither Minowa et al. nor Nitta et al. are believed to teach “a drying step of drying the conductive paste coated on said other ends in said coating step by mainly heating the conductive paste coated part of the chip-style electronic components” as recited in amended Claim 1. On the other hand, because of the required property described above, Minowa et al. and Nitta et al. utilize a plate-like, i.e., rigid, member, and in Minowa et al. and Nitta et al., the plate-like member for holding the electronic component cannot be replaced with the film-like member easily. Use of the plate-like member for holding the electronic component is based on the necessity of heating the entire electronic component.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Minoea et al. and Nitta et al. do not disclose or suggest using the film holding the electronic component and the partial heating which enables the use of the film. Therefore, the subject matter recited in amended Claim 1 is believed to be distinguishable from Minowa et al. and Nitta et al.

JP '785 discloses an adhesive tape for electronic parts carrier, and a carrying method and mounting method of electronic parts. However, JP '785 is not believed to teach "a drying step of drying the conductive paste coated on said other ends in said coating step by mainly heating the conductive past coated part of the chip-style electronic components" as recited in amended Claim 1 either. Thus, the subject matter recited in Claim 1 is also believed to be distinguishable from JP '785.

Because none of Minowa et al., Nitto et al. and JP '785 discloses the drying step as recited in amended Claim 1, even the combined teachings of these cited references are not believed to render the subject matter recited in Claim 1 obvious.

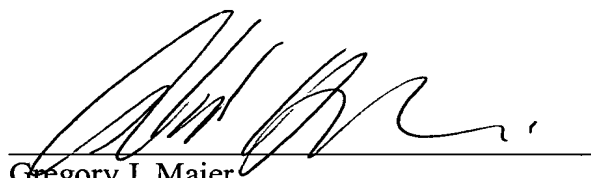
For the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 2-5 ultimately depend from Claim 1, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2-5 are believed to be allowable as well.

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In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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